



(U//FOUO) SID Plays Host to Experts on the UN

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(U//FOUO) With a theme of "*The United Nations in a Time of Change: Policy and Intelligence Partnering to Achieve U.S. Objectives*," the SINIO Council and Customer Gateway hosted the latest in a series of SID Customer Days (**"UN Day at NSA"**) on November 15. Why UN Day? Because 59 years after its founding, the UN continues to be front-page news -- and to receive attention at the highest levels of the U.S. government -- as never before.

(U//FOUO) Indeed, although the U.S.-UN relationship has had significant ups and downs, the UN remains an invaluable arm of U.S. foreign policy even while it faces some of the greatest institutional challenges of its history: corruption scandals, a potentially massive reform effort, and a rethinking of its modus operandi after the August 19, 2003 bombing of UN headquarters in Baghdad. In short, it was never such an auspicious time to host a wide-ranging discussion on "whither the UN?"

(S//SI) "UN Day" was graced by the presence of dozens of UN experts from across the policy and intelligence worlds. Representatives of State, the U.S. Mission to the UN, the Pentagon, the National Intelligence Council, CIA, and a wide range of NSA offices loaned their knowledge to the proceedings. The day was split into three parts:

1. morning plenary sessions, including an introduction by Deputy SIGINT Deputy Director Charlie Meals, a keynote address by U.S. Representative to the UN for Management and Reform Patrick Kennedy (in his second NSA appearance), an NSA Perspective by Deputy International Security Issues Production Manager [REDACTED], and a policy maker's view of UN-related SIGINT by State/UN Political Affairs Director [REDACTED];
2. demonstrations of SIGINT production in the Russian Foreign Policy Branch; and
3. breakout sessions on "UN Reform," "Peacekeeping in the 21st Century," "Inside the Brains of the UN Security Council Permanent Representatives," "Changes to the UN Psyche Since August 19, 2003," and "The UN General Assembly: U.S. Priorities and Related Issues." The breakout sessions were facilitated not only by NSAers, but by members of State, the CIA, and the NIC.

(U//FOUO) So what did we get out of UN Day? First and foremost it was profoundly useful to have so many UN watchers, from such varied backgrounds, in the same room. Ambassador Kennedy was an especially apt keynote speaker because of his hands-on experience with two of the most crucial issues facing the UN (reform and the return to Iraq). However, the fact that he was joined by so many participants giving freely of their time and expertise truly made the day a success.

(S//SI) Secondly, however, UN Day was also excellent public relations for NSA: our analysts had a chance to exhibit their UN expertise in the plenary and breakout sessions, while the demonstrations in the Office of Russia showed our outside guests what a labor of time and skill it is to produce the SIGINT reporting that they read and use every day. But just as importantly, myriad NSAers worked diligently to ensure that our guests had a smoothly-running, edifying, and enjoyable day. As [REDACTED] alluded to in her talk, it "takes a village" to produce UN-related product for our UN-watching customers. It also "took a village" to make UN Day come off. Many thanks to all!

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